

Message Text

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: SECRETARY'S LATEST TRIP

1. SUMMARY. BEIRUT PRESS EXPRESSES WIDE RANGE OF OPINIONS ON SECRETARY'S LATEST TRIP. SEVERAL PAPERS, INCLUDING LEADING INDEPENDENT "AN-NAHAR" AND LEADING PRO-EGYPTIAN "AL-ANWAR", SEE HIS TALKS WITH GROMYKO AS POSITIVE SIGN. OTHERS, INCLUDING PRO-SYRIAN "ASH-SHARQ" AND PRO-SOVIET "ASH-SHA'B", DISCOUNT HIS EFFORTS ENTIRELY AND CALL FOR IMMEDIATE RESUMPTION OF GENEVA CONFERENCE, BUT PRO-SAUDI "AL-HAYAT" WONDERS WHETHER ARABS ARE REALLY READY FOR SUCH A STEP. PRO-PLO "AL-MUHARRIR" INSISTS ON CENTRALITY OF PALESTINE QUESTION, WHILE PFLP WEEKLY "AL-HADAF" AND PRO-LIBYAN "AS-SAFIR" CALL FOR RESISTANCE TO "LIQUIDATIVE SETTLEMENT PLAN." END SUMMARY.

2. MICHEL ABU JAWDEH, CHIEF, EDITOR OF LEADING INDEPENDENT "AN-NAHAR", WRITES IN FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL: "SOVIET AND AMERICAN MIDEAST POLICIES, WHILE NOT IN AGREEMENT, REMAIN WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF DETENTE. EACH SIDE IS TRYING TO SECURE VICTORY FOR ITS POLICY, BUT WITHOUT OBSTRUCTING SEARCH FOR

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PEACE SETTLEMENT.... SOVIET-AMERICAN MEETING WAS FOR

PURPOSE OF REACHING AGREEMENT ON MIDEAST, BECAUSE TWO COUNTRIES ARE PART OF CRISIS.... THIS IS WHY THERE IS FEELING THAT GENEVA MEETING WILL MOVE QUESTION OF PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT SEVERAL STEPS FORWARD."

3. LEADING PRO-EGYPTIAN "AL-ANWAR" WRITES: "IMPORTANCE OF KISSINGER-GROMYKO MEETING DOES NOT NEED TO BE UNDERLINED. THIS IF FIRST MEETING BETWEEN FONMINS OF TWO SUPERPOWERS SINCE SETBACK SUFFERED BY 'BROAD DETENTE'.... ITS RENEWAL WILL INEVITABLY REFLECT NOT ONLY ON ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE, BUT ON METHODS OF DEALING WITH INTERNATIONAL ISSUES IN GENERAL."

4. PRO-SYRIAN "ASH-SHARQ" WRITES IN FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL: "HAS MIDEAST ISSUE REACHED DEAD END? PRESIDENT ASAD HAS DECLARED TO SOVIET AND AMERICAN FONMINS THAT HE IS IMPATIENT WITH AMERICAN AND ZIONIST TRICKS AND INTENDS TO MAKE AMERICA AND ISRAEL FACE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN A GENEVA CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN FEBRUARY OR MARCH AT LATEST AND AT WHICH IT WILL BE DECIDED EITHER THAT ISRAEL WITHDRAW FROM ALL OCCUPIED ARAB LANDS AND LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF PALESTINIANS BE RESTORED OR THAT FIGHTING BE RESUMED. SOVIET FONMIN GROMYKO HAS ACCEPTED THIS IDEA AND IS CONVINCED OF ITS SOUNDNESS... BUT AMERICAN SECRETARY HAS USED ALL HIS INTELLIGENCE AND SHREWDNESS TO HIDE HIS FAILURE AND PUT US OFF WITH PROMISE THAT HE WILL MAKE NEW VISIT IN MARCH TO BRING BACK DEFINITIVE AMERICAN VIEW. THIS PROMISE IS CUNNING REPLY TO SOVIET AND SYRIAN DEMAND THAT GENEVA CONFERENCE BE URGENTLY CONVENED IN FEBRUARY OR EARLY MARCH. JOINT STATEMENT ISSUED FOLLOWING MEETINGS OF SOVIET AND AMERICAN FONMINS REFERRED TO DIFFERENCES OVER THIS POINT, AND THERE IS NO USE IN KISSINGER'S CONTINUING HIS TRIPS AND TOURS IF QUESTION HAS REACHED DEAD END."

5. PRO-SOVIET "ASH-SHA'B" WRITES: "IMAGINE HOW MUCH TIME HAS BEEN WASTED. HAD GENEVA CONFERENCE BEEN CONVENED TO REVIEW PROBLEM AND TRY TO SOLVE IT EIGHT MONTHS AGO, NEGOTIATORS WOULD BY NOW HAVE GOTTEN SOMETHING CLEARLY BETTER THAN THE 'ZERO' AT WHICH AMERICAN SECRETARY'S ENDEAVORS HAVE ENDED. IF MR. KISSINGER HAS MAGIC POWERS AND EXCEPTIONAL NEGOTIATING ABILITY, WHAT PREVENTS HIM FROM PUTTING THEM TO WORK IN GENEVA? WOULD IT NOT BE EASIER AND QUICKER FOR KISSINGER TO MOVE FROM UNCLASSIFIED

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ROOM TO ROOM AT GENEVA, PRACTICING HIS GENIUS ON ARAB AND ISRAELI DELEGATIONS, INSTEAD OF MOVING FROM CAPITAL TO CAPITAL, SUFFERING BURDENS OF EXTENDED TRAVEL?"

6. CONSERVATIVE PRO-SAUDI "AL-HAYAT" WRITES: "HAVE THOSE WHO DEMAND GENEVA CONFERENCE AGREED TO GO TO GENEVA? HAVE THEY AGREED ON POSITION THEY WILL ADOPT IF THEY GO? HAVE THEY REACHED UNDERSTANDING OVER WHAT THEY WILL OFFER OR PROPOSE,

WHAT THEY WILL ACCEPT OR REJECT, WHAT THEY WILL ANNOUNCE OR WITHHOLD? IN TWO WEEKS OR LESS, DR. KISSINGER WILL RETURN TO MIDEAST. IT HAS BEEN REPORTED THAT LAST WORDS HE WHISPERED TO SOME ARAB OFFICIALS BEFORE LEAVING AREA WERE THAT HE FEARS ROAD TO SETTLEMENT IS BLOCKED NOT BY ABSENCE OF INTERNATIONAL DETENTE, BUT BY ABSENCE OF ARAB DETENTE."

7. RIYAD ABU MILHIM, EDITORIAL DIRECTOR OF LEADING LEFTIST PRO-PLO "AL-MUHARRIR", WRITES: "PROBLEM GOES BEYOND MARGINAL FORMAL AGREEMENTS NOW BEING WORKED OUT BEHIND DIPLOMATIC SCENES. IT IS QUESTION OF PEOPLE EXPELLED FROM ITS HOMELAND AND REPLACED BY ANOTHER.... WHEN ISSUE IS SEEN IN THIS LIGHT, IT IS CLEARLY BEYOND POWER OF KISSINGER OR ANY OTHER 'MAGICIAN' TO SOLVE IT IF SETTLEMENT IS NOT BASED ON RETURN TO NORMAL STATE OF AFFAIRS, WITH PALESTINIANS RETURNING TO THEIR HOMELAND AND JEWS.. RETURNING TO THEIR ORIGINAL HOMES."

8. PFLP WEEKLY ORGAN "AL-HADAF" WRITES IN LEAD EDITORIAL: "KISSINGER'S VISIT TO AREA AIMS AT LOOTING WEALTH OF HOMELAND, CREATING SAFETY VALVE TO SECURE CONTINUATION OF THIS LOOTING, AND IMPOSING ISRAEL AS INTEGRAL PART OF AREA.... REAL NATIONALIST RETORT IS TO PROVE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS BY RESISTING LIQUIDATIVE SETTLEMENT PLAN."

9. SYRIAN COLUMNIST GHALIB KAYYALI WRITES IN PRO-LIBYAN WEEKLY "BEIRUT AL-MASA"; "KISSINGER'S EXPLORATORY TRIP WAS NEITHER COMPLETE FAILURE NOR COMPLETE SUCCESS. HE KNOWS THAT, WHEN HE RETURNS IN MARCH FOR HIS LATEST MOVE IN MIDEAST, HE MUST SUCCEED. IF NOT, HIS VISIT WILL BE HIS LAST. SYRIA HAS KICKED BALL INTO ISRAEL'S COURT, AND IT WILL STAY THERE UNTIL KISSINGER'S RETURN. WILL ISRAEL SAVE 'DEAR HENRY' BY... ACCEPTING SYRIAN CONDITIONS, OR WILL TEL AVIV
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SENTENCE KISSINGER'S POLITICAL LIFE AND 'STEP-BY-STEP' INVENTION TO DEATH?"

10. TALAL SALMAN, CHIEF EDITOR OF PRO-LIBYAN "AS-SAFIR", WRITES: "NEW AMERICAN PLOT TO REDRAW MAP OF ARAB WORLD IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS IMPERIALIST INTERESTS IS SO CLEAR THAT IT REQUIRES NO PROOF OR EVIDENCE.... COORDINATION AMONG SAUDI ARABIA, IRAN, U.S., AND OF COURSE JORDAN IS INCREASING AND BENEFITING FROM WEAK EGYPTIAN POLICY THAT IS BOWING TO PRESSURES DESIGNED TO LIQUIDATE PALESTINIAN CAUSE.... PARTIES ONE MAY EXPECT TO RESIST THIS ARE VERY FEW-- ALGERIA AND LIBYA IN WEST, SYRIA, IRAQ, AND PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE IN EAST, AND PDRY IN SOUTHEAST."
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